REMARKS

Status:

Claims1-23 stand finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by the teaching of US Patent No. 6,199,195 to Goodwin et al (hereinafter Goodwin).

Amendments to the two independent claims, 1 and 10, are proposed for entry to more strongly emphasize Applicant's contribution, relating to the use of special descriptors to enable lifecycle definition flexibility to adjust to actual activity instance processing occurring at runtime. These and dependent claims 2-9 and 11-23 are presented for reconsideration as is explained in the discussion which follows.

Analysis:

Looking to the Office Action, the Goodwin teaching is again used as an anticipation. This reference does, indeed, mention life cycle (Goodwin col.5, lines 26 and 55) as a behavior in the singular. This is typical of prior art service specifications such as CORBA.(mentioned by Goodwin col. 5, line 25 with respect to life cycle) Life cycle in the prior art is fixed for a class. Applicant has recognized that for many transactions this is inefficient.

Applicant remedies this problem by applying a descriptor to activity objects that specifies alternative life cycles, with the life cycle alternatives corresponding to various alternatives for runtime processing. This is not taught or suggested by Goodwin. Goodwin provides a development tool for generating business objects and all reference it to traditional JAVA structures. Where is there a teaching of selecting among alternative life cycles according to processing occurring at runtime; much less, assigning descriptors as a vehicle for identifying such alternatives?

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Consider Applicants' improvement with reference to a bank deposit transaction. With one life cycle possibility (Goodwin) the transaction must be posted in real time because that is a requirement for ATM machine deposits. But, Applicants' invention allows counter deposits to be accumulated to be posted at the end of the day if desired without creating a separate class. This is because a class using using Applicants' descriptors may support alternatives respective of conditions at runtime.

This use of descriptors to identify life cycle alternatives which are selected at runtime is a significant departure, with major savings in processing overhead. The independent claims have been amended to strongly emphasize such use of descriptors to specify alternatives, which are respectively selected according to runtime processing activity. See, for example, claim 1 at lines 7-8 and 11-12 or claim 10 at lines 4-6 and 10. Clearly these are not the fixed at-development-time life cycles of Goodwin.

The dependent claims serve to protect aspects of the invention that cooperate with the flexible life cycles. For example claims 3 and 12 bring in client activity, which might be the deposit of a check at an ATM, which might trigger, at run time, the alternative of a single event life cycle with deposit posting in real time.

Consistent with the above discussion, it is believed that the claims now clearly identify inventive subject matter over the teachings of Goodwin and the other prior art.

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Accordingly, it is believed this case has been placed in condition for allowance. Early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted

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